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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/974,885	10/12/2001	Jen-Fu Lee	LEEJ3012/EM/7260	7650

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EXAMINER

KRISCIUNAS, LINDA MARY

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3623

DATE MAILED: 03/06/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/974,885	LEE, JEN-FU	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Linda Krisciunas	3623	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 October 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 12 October 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This is a First Office Action in response to the Application filed October 12, 2001.

Claims 1-7 are pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

3. Claims 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Jain et al (US 2002/0069121).

As per claim 1, Jain teaches an inventory management system having a database and a network connection interconnected a product manufacturer and at least one component part supplier comprising (See Figure 1 and paragraph 17: Trading Community, where there are customers, suppliers and distributors etc): estimating possible quantity of component parts supplied from the component part supplier based on spare part records of the component part supplier stored in the database (paragraph 17: "supply assurance request" is sent to each supplier to determine the ability to fulfill the order for the specified parts. This acts as a (see paragraph 21) "pre-purchase order" which involves various "business objects" including bill of materials.); writing the

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estimation into one of a plurality of documents wherein a quantity, a description, and a proportion of the component parts of a product required in a forthcoming period of time are listed in fields of the document (paragraph 21: where the “pre-purchase order” involves various “business objects” including bill of materials. This is equivalent to writing the product quantity and description as it performs an identical function in substantially the same manner with substantially the same results.); and informing the component part supplier of the proportion of the component parts listed in the document through the network connection for confirmation (paragraph 17: where the customer generates a supply assurance request to each of the partner suppliers to query the availability of products.).

As per claim 5, Jain teaches the component part supplier is allowed to modify the estimated proportion of the component parts in the fields of the document directly, if the proportion is not achievable in the forthcoming period of time (paragraph 25: if the product is not available then the program takes actions defined by the customer. One of these actions being to involve human interaction where the supply assurance replies may include data regarding when a product demand can be met, customer partner can beneficially use the data to, for example, re-adjust the forecast or workload. This is equivalent to the supplier modifying the value as it performs an identical function in substantially the same manner with substantially the same result. The supplier has the opportunity to respond with the product he can produce and by what time, but the customer has the ability to accept or reject it and send the request to another supplier.).

As per claim 6, teaches the system determines whether the component part supplier has replied the document to a computer of the product manufacture within a predetermined period of time after receiving the same by a computer system of the component part supplier, and the system stores the replied document in the database if the determination is positive (paragraph 25: "After supply assurance requests 271C are transmitted, program 2080C waits to receive all supply assurance replies 285S. In one embodiment, the data in supply assurance replies 285S are stored in a database.").

As per claim 7, teaches if the determination is negative, the system takes the estimated quantity of the component parts as a possible quantity of the component parts supplied by the component part supplier in the forthcoming period of time and store the same in the database (paragraph 25: "After supply assurance requests 271C are transmitted, program 2080C waits to receive all supply assurance replies 285S. In one embodiment, the data in supply assurance replies 285S are stored in a database. Based on the data provided by supply assurance replies 285S, program 2080C takes appropriate actions. For example, if all desired products are "available," then program 2080C generates one purchase order 275C to each supplier partner 108S to place the orders. In accordance with one embodiment, all desired products are available if each of the queried products can be provided by a specified date. Such availability may be from one or a combination of the general inventory, bonded inventory, and consignment inventory. However, if any one of the products is not available, then program 2080C takes actions defined by customer 108C. Program 2080C may, for example, generate a report and send it to responsible personnel. Program 2080C may

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also re-send supply assurance request 271C to another supplier 108S for another supply assurance request. Program 2080C usually uses an approved vendor's list (AVL) to select a supplier 108S in order of priority provided in the AVL. Alternatively, program 2080C can raise an exception to involve human interaction, such as sending an email to personnel in charge of generating the requests 271C or to other appropriate personnel. Because supply assurance replies 285S may include data regarding when a product demand can be met, customer partner 108C can beneficially use the data, such as in re-adjusting his forecast or workload." Where all the replies are recorded in the database and the option of allowing human interaction from the supplier to indicate when product demand can be met is deemed equivalent to a potential status as it performs an identical function in substantially the same manner with substantially the same results.).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 2-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jain et al in view of Lidow (US 2002/0194043)

As per claims 2-4, Jain does not explicitly teach spare parts inventory. Lidow teaches that it is known that the spare parts records of the component part supplier are

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recorded monthly, yearly, as an average (paragraph 68, where the forecast is supplied in varying time frames: daily, weekly, ad hoc etc. and the forecast is directly related to the inventory on hand. It is well known that the inventory can be measured at various intervals.). Lidow is an analogous art as it also teaches about inventory management. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the inventory management system of Jain with the spare parts inventory feature of Lidow to provide a more efficient and timely system.

Conclusion

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The following art also teaches about inventory management: Vaughan et al (US 2003/0036981), Khan (US 2002/0032611), Grettve et al (US 6,591,243), Hennig et al (US 6,587,827), Kennedy (US 6,188,989), Lindoefer et al (US 2002/0069096), Vanker et al (US 2002/0099631), Lidow (US 6,889,197), Mowery et al (US 5,983,198), Rush et al (US 6,119,102), Smirnov et al (US 6,321,133), Parad (US 5,369,570), McCormick (US 2002/0040352), Haber et al (US 2003/0009366), and Lucas (US 2001/0051905).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Linda Krisciunas whose telephone number is 571-272-6931. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, 6:30 am to 3:00 pm.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq Hafiz can be reached on 571-272-6729. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

LMK

LMK
March 1, 2006


TARIQ R. HAFIZ
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
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